Tourism policy for J&K

1613. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would change its tourism policy with regard to Jammu and Kashmir in the light of recent terrorist attacks on tourists in the State; and

(b) if so, the plan of action in this regard as it seems that the discussion with terrorist organizations are not yielding any results?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) No. Sir. The steps taken by the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir and Security Forces in an endeavor to make the security environment progressively safe for tourists include-deployment of separate tourist police and enforcement wing at Srinagar/Jammu and other tourist places to look after and protect the interests of the tourists; adequate deployment of Security forces/State police with regular partrolling and anti-sabotage checks around the tourist spots and roads leading to such places; permanent security arrangements at the Shrine of Mata Vaishno devi at Katra and its proximity; arrangement of special security arrangements for pilgrims visiting Shri Amarnath Ji Cave, Pahalgam and Kheer Bhawani; organising special FAM tours of travel trade from Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Hyderabad to Kashmir from 2nd to 6th of August 2006.

Tourist inflow

†1614. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that tourists are avoiding visiting India after explosions by terrorists in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details of the measures taken by Government to protect tourists in order to boost tourism in the country; and

(c) the details of the number of tourists visited India this year so far against four million in the last year?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The increase in tourist arrivals to the country during the current year as compared to the last year does not indicate that tourists are avoiding visiting the country.

(b) Safety and security is a State subject. The Ministry of Tourism has advised the State Governments/UTs for deployment of Tourism Police and to take adequate measures for the safety of tourists at all important tourist centres/destinations.

(c) Details of foreign tourist arrivals to the country during the first seven months of the current year, as compared to the corresponding months of the previous year are given below:

Months	2005*	2006*	%change 2006/05
January to July	2183573	2486117	+13.9%

*Provisional

Attraction of foreign tourists

1615. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of foreign tourists visited India during the years 2004-05 and 2005-06;

(b) whether India has not been able to attract more foreign tourists;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the steps taken by Government to attract foreign tourists;

(e) whether other Central Government Departments have been requested to cooperate in attracting foreign tourists;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the response of these Departments?